

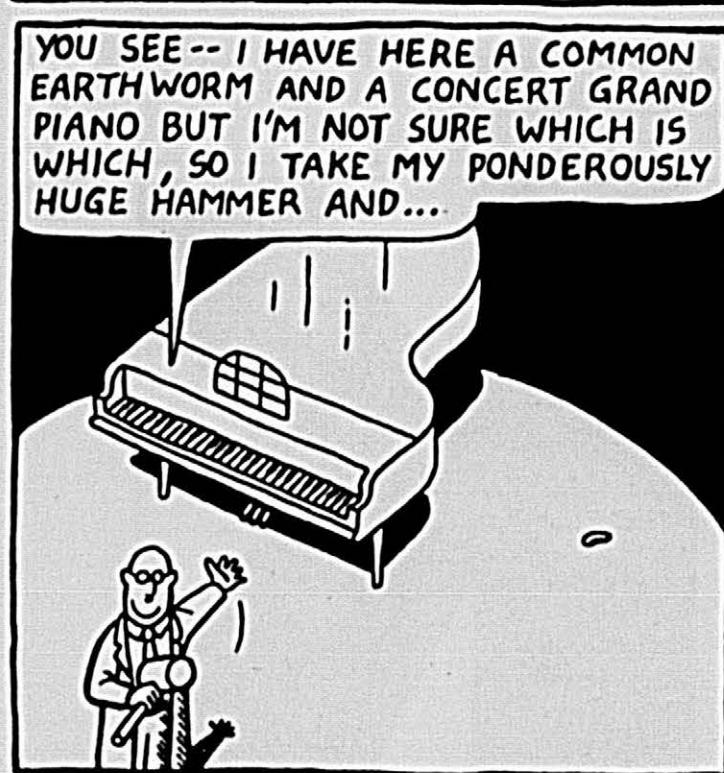
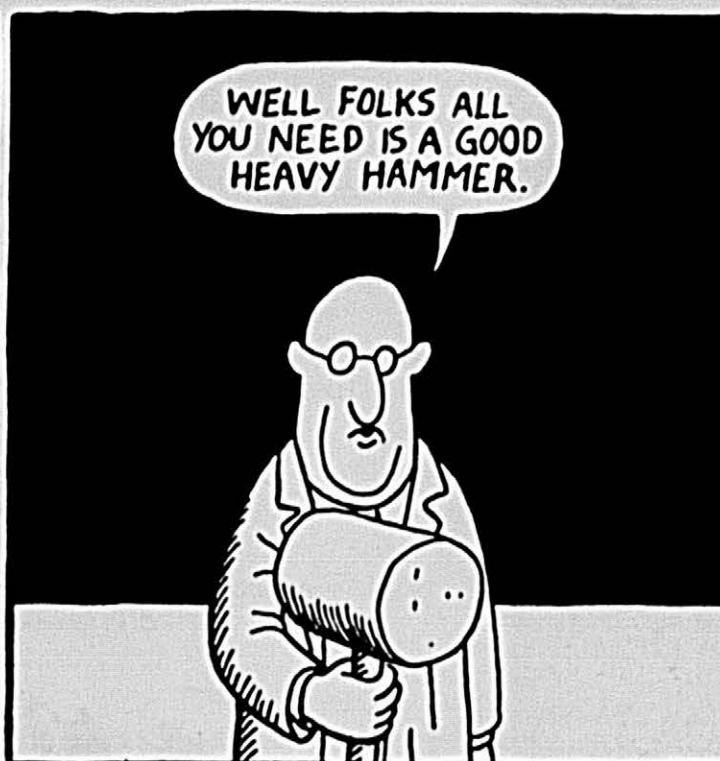
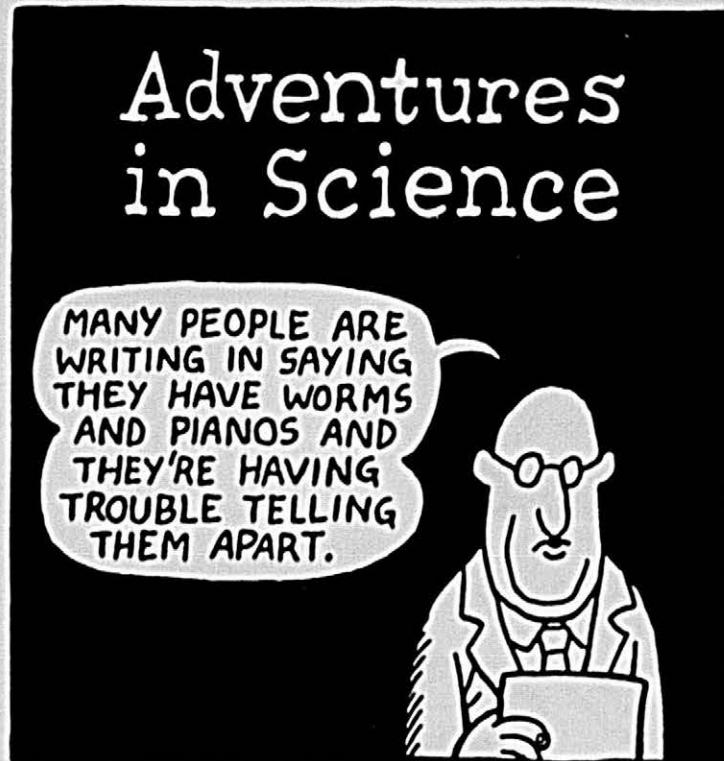
# MCGILL DAILY CULTURE

Volume 80, Number 23

Since 1911

Thursday, October 18, 1990

## Brown's comics yummy and furry



by Dan Robins

Okay, so I haven't seen *Eraserhead*, and I dozed through *Blue Velvet*, and I have yet to see an episode of *Twin Peaks*, but I have read the comic strip *Ed, the Happy Clown*, by the Chateauguay-born, Toronto-dwelling artist Chester Brown, and that puts me ahead of most of the rest of you.

Not that no one's read Brown's comics. He gets letters from all over the English-speaking world, saying, "Hey, I love your stuff, but it sure is hard to find it here."

Unfortunately, among the people who read the strips are customs officials, and they tend not to be as pleased with them as others might be. On occasion they even get downright nasty, so sometimes *Yummy Fur*, as the comic is known, has trouble getting into this country.

It used to have trouble just getting printed. Printers were refusing to handle it - they'd print one issue, realize what they'd done, and drop it quick. Luckily, a laid-back Stateside printer was found, and this particular problem came to an end.

Chester Brown originally wanted to do superhero comics, but that's just not the way it turned out. On the contrary, he ended up with *Yummy Fur*, first as an independently produced mini-comic, and later, starting in 1986, as a full-sized comic put out by Vortex Comics.

There is no single reason why Brown does his comic, he told the *Daily* recently in Montréal, "I wouldn't do it if it wasn't fun." However, as is obvious from reading the comics, he often tries to make a point inserting some "general observations about life" as he put it.

Brown came to town to guest at the 'Con-cept' Science Fiction/Fantasy convention last weekend, and the *Daily* caught up with him at an autographing session at Nebula bookstore.

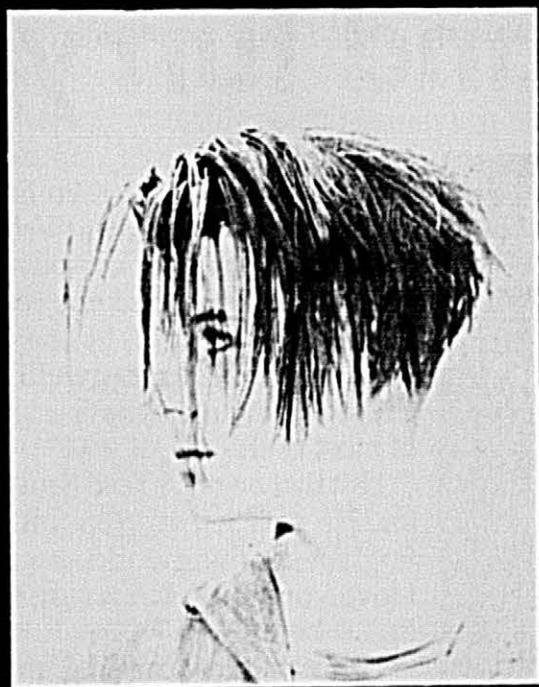
As we talked, I tried to avoid asking him the dreaded "where do you get your ideas" question, but eventually it managed to just slip out. His answer was as simple as it was obvious: "Probably the same place dreams come from."

### Penises

When it started, *Yummy Fur* was a rather perverse little comic. Scientists studied squid masturbation. Toilet paper revolted (as it usually does). At one point, newscasters were faced with the problem of "how to present to a television audience a story about mountains of feces, people crawling through

continued on page 8

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# Women's films document activism

by Anne Kuriakose

Independent video can serve as an inspiring network for women in struggle at the grassroots level, as was exemplified by two works screened at Cinéma Parallèle Tuesday night.

The first, by New York filmmaker Ellen Spiro, was *DiAna's Hair Ego: AIDS Info Up Front*. It focused on an AIDS education group run since 1986 out of a beauty parlour in South Carolina.

The second film, by Montréalaise Marie-Hélène Cousineau, introduces the Israeli "Women in Black" movement. The movement is made up of both Jewish and Arab women, and since 1987 (the birth of the *intifada*) has opposed Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

SCAEN (South Carolina AIDS Education Network) began very simply. Hairdresser DiAna Diana of Columbia collected AIDS and safe sex information for her customers, handing out free gift wrapped condoms along with the usual advice on hair relaxers and perms. She saw that official safe sex campaigns were not reaching her clients, predominantly black women, some with sexually active children who also needed information.

As Anne Golden of GIV (Groupe Intervention Vidéo), the film's Montréal distributors, states, "This is one of the best grass-roots AIDS education films I've seen. It gets away from the urban white male Act-Up

type group," which, while doing good and important work, does not always speak to the whole population.

Posters adorn DiAna's salon walls saying, "A tisket, a tasket, a condom or a casket." She has had to bombard her community with information—in churches "I said the C-word in there," with schoolchildren of all ages, at women's business organizations.

Her Safe Sex parties explore safe possibilities with games like Strip Darts ("With just this article of clothing missing on your partner, what could you do safely?"), the latest in vibrating sexual gadgetry, and several games with condoms ("Can you put it on using just your mouth?").

Harsh realities such as a big "Quarantine" sign in the front yard of the family of a person with AIDS prove the stigma is there. SCAEN hopes to get society beyond this point, educating not just adults but teen-agers and children. The eighth-grade boys described participating in weekly Friday night "fuck-a-thons" modeled on *Debbie Does Dallas* are among the groups DiAna needs to reach.

Despite the tremendous work done by SCAEN—grown now to over 8000 members—state and federal health agencies repeatedly deny funding to the group. "Morality" crusaders wield such power that abstinence is touted as the only possible choice, however unrealistic.

Women against Israeli aggression

Marie-Hélène Cousineau's *Women in Black* carries the activist ethic to points further afield. Throughout Israel there are over 1000 Jewish and Arab women who dress in black to protest the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories together each Friday.

These women are of diverse political opinions. Some support the *intifada* and some do not. But the point stressed by the movement is peace, which they think possible only when the occupation ends.

While in Israel last spring to work on another film, Cousineau met Penina Feiler, an Israeli woman from a kibbutz near Tel Aviv and an active Woman in Black. Feiler's commitment inspired Cousineau to document the movement.

Out of the hundreds of people living in the two kibbutzim in the area, only six are actively protesting the Occupation. Feiler travels to the neighboring kibbutz each Friday to protest with five other women. In the film, she speaks of the stress of trying to live a normal life while acutely aware of the "mutilation and death" of youth on both sides.

Women in Black is a very loosely organized group, open to any woman who wants to protest on Fridays. "If you want to do it, you do it on your own street," says Cousineau. Therefore, the size of their membership is hard to judge. A caucus

in Jerusalem, for instance, once drew 4000 Israeli and Palestinian women.

The more than 100 women who usually protest in Jerusalem are not well received. A male counter-protest is filmed defaming the Women in Black as a "Danger to the State: the Women in Black are another Fifth Column."

Cousineau says the aggression against the Women in Black is not caused by their politics but simply because of their sex. They have spoken up in a society which does not ask for the opinion of women. "It is women presenting a political view, that is what is extreme," she says.

The women draw the connection between the oppression of the Palestinians and the position of women. For some Women in Black, "as Palestinian women in Israeli society, we feel double oppression."

As Penina Feiler says, "It's a schizophrenic situation. It's my people doing the shooting and my neighbors being shot at."

When Israelis say to her it's just Arabs being killed, she reminds them of the history of the oppression of Jewish people all over the world. "We have the right to the country but that doesn't mean we can kill other people. It's not only sorrow for them, it's sorrow for us."

Another Woman in Black echoes her thoughts. "I don't want to be an Israeli with an occupying army," she says. "It's degrading to us and to the other side who is being occupied."

In Israel, to be moderate is to be seen as a traitor to the cause. Feiler explains, "Fundamentalists and extremists on both sides are moving very quickly—changes are too fast. Moderates, including Yasser Arafat and the PLO, don't move quickly, they don't show progress," so the extremists win support and "Arafat is called a Zionist" by extremist Arabs.

Feiler pleads with Cousineau to "please show that (extremist Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir and (Housing Minister Ariel) Sharon are not all of Israel—that half of Israel doesn't want the Palestinian territories... Governments change and we need help from abroad to prove that not all Israelis are extremist. These Fascists are fueling anti-Semitism."

The filmmaker skillfully intersperses protest and interview scenes with reminders of the state of siege—men hiding behind second-storey windows with walkie-talkies, twenty soldiers with assault rifles milling around the village square in slow motion, a man on a bus with a gun across his lap and bullet holes on the seat in front of him.

Both *DiAna's Hair Ego: AIDS Info Up Front* and *Women in Black* present much-needed images of self-help activism by women who successfully buck destructive male power structures each day.

## Musicians probe the east-west aural network

by Heather MacKay

One woman, one man, one flute, five silk strings and a cluster of Japanese/Dutch musical locution could make for a mettlesome show and probably will when Junko Ueda and Wil Offermans come together for their first Montréal appearance this Sunday.

She is Junko Ueda, a Japanese composer who plays the Satsuma-Biwa (more about this later). Ueda began Buddhist chanting, known as Shomyo, while studying piano, and later composition, in Tokyo. In her performances with Offermans, she mixes vocals with her strumming to ascend to even stranger levels of musical tension.

He is Wil Offermans, performer of both composed and improvised sounds on flute and piccolo, best known for *Round About 12.5*, a solo recording released in 1986. That fall he brought the 12.5 road show to Japan, where he bred his western ways with more easternly strains. The worldwide flute tour stopped in 18 countries in the space of seven months.

Together, the two musicians perform duets and solo pieces with lyrics from Japanese sto-

ries and sometimes, newspaper clippings. Offermans has also been known to plant a video camera on stage monitoring his throat movements in an almost erotic mating of air and muscle.

It may have been breath above all that brought the two together. Offermans' techniques include what he calls 'multiphonics', extremely soft sounds, circular breathing and unplanned interruptions by his own singing voice. Ueda concentrates on breathing, too, between words often uninterpretable to a western ear. Long breaths, intonation and phrasing are Ueda's pathways into the Occidental aural network, where foreign tongues might not quite register.

Both performers have collaborated with other progressive musicians in the past. Ueda was pianist for *Brecht Kollektiv*, a Tokyo based company that performed at Haiyu-za theatre, Studio 200 and the Goethe Institute. Offermans has worked with several prominent Japanese artists, including mime/dancer Tari-Ito. He has also been giving lecture-workshops at various schools around the



Wil Offermans and Junko Ueda.

world since 1985.

While the flute and its winded siblings are not strangers to the audience, the Satsuma-Biwa may well be a weirdo. There are many kinds of Biwa. Its origins go back to the Arabic Ud of the Middle East, the Chinese Pipa, and the European lute. Anglo-saxons might say it

looks something like a guitar.

A bigger and heavier Satsuma-Biwa was once used by warriors to sing heroic songs, which is funny in contrast to Ueda's littleness. The best Biwas are reportedly made of mulberry wood, and the best strings, of silk strands plied together with rice-paste and tuned to the player's voice. The buzzy sound

of the Biwa, known as Sawari, comes from varying the tension of the strings.

The two breathers will exhale into the space betwixt east and west Sunday, 15 at Théâtre La Chapelle, 3700 St. Dominique. Admission is \$7. 845-1307 for more information.

Those of you who now or once fancied yourselves culture writers, or aspire someday to be so fancy, please attend tomorrow (Friday)'s CULTURE WRITERS MEETING. In the *Daily* office, 16h. That's Friday. Union B-03. Come chat artistically, with Carl and Mani. Or call 398-6784.

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# Grape stomping benefit for boycott

By Mani Haghghi

Next Thursday the Union Ballroom will be filled with a group of funny looking musicians munching on pumpkins and singing about grapes, when the Wrath of Grapes support group holds its second annual *Hallowe'en Grape Stomp*.

The benefit hopes to encourage support for the international boycott of California grapes: They might taste good and look juicy, but they can kill.

It will host four Canadian bands: Vancouver's Nyetz and Montréal's Rhythm Activism, Bag of Hammers and The Ballad Mongers. All the cash will go to the boycott campaign.

This is the first time we've had a chance to catch a glimpse of Nyetz in Montréal. They sort of sound like a vastly improved version of the British band Anything But The Girl, with lots of funky accordion chords and fiddle melodies thrown in to lighten things up.

Occasionally their songs remind you of old French movie soundtracks (the sort of things you hear when you see the woman in the black polka-dot skirt ask the man in the black hat for a light), but at the end of the tape they convince you they'd be great to see live. They seem to have made it big on the West Coast anyway, and they sound weird enough to do the same here.

The supporting bands at the benefit will be more familiar faces. Rhythm Activism in particular have been planting themselves firmly in our fields of vision this fall with their brand of "perogy resistance cabaret": Perogy because they're Polish, resistance because they do politically fun stuff like not eat grapes and cabaret because that's basically what their gig is all about. To add to their enigma, they're promising a "heavily electric and somewhat medieval" show this time.

So what's all this medieval grape and pumpkin perogy hype about? It's about Death. Specifically, three kinds of death. First, the deaths of workers in the vineyards. According

to the World Resources Institute, about 300 000 workers are poisoned by pesticides in the U.S. every year. This seemingly vague statistic shrouds, among others, the eleven Dominican sailors who were killed after the cargo of cocoa in their ship was sprayed with methyl bromide.

The second kind of death is slower and more watery. It hits you (if you live in the grape growing regions of California) when you drink what is laughably called the "drinking water." The people who conducted a U.S. government study done in 1988 discovered thirty-six types of pesticides in the California drinking water, including DBCP, a pesticide banned thirteen years ago for its extreme toxicity.

The third kind of death will be of interest even to the most apathetic parts of the populace. It is imported, uninspected death. Canadian Auditor General Kenneth Dye (unofficial Minister of Homophony) wrote in his 1988 annual report that "Health and Welfare Canada does not know the extent of human health risks posed by chemical and bacterial contamination."

Again, this wonderfully safe and calm sentence becomes slightly more interesting when we learn that two years before it was written, one out of every ten grapes Canadians happily munched had illegally high levels of pesticides hidden inside it.

These, incidentally, are still kicking around somewhere inside your intestines, waiting for their buddies to be trucked in all the way from sunny Florida into your mouth, so they can get together and have a consumer cancer party.

So, quite clearly, next Thursday's benefit concert is a question of life and death. Grab your funky witch brooms, bake some pumpkin pies, and go to the Union ballroom to say Yes to Nyetz and No to California grapes. Remember, they might be yummy, but can they ever kill.



Nyetz performs in McGill Ballroom at *Hallowe'en Grape Stomp*.

## Laid back stage fighters go at it at Players' Theatre workshop

by Lucy Payette

Looking for a fight? The McGill Players' Theatre is giving actors the chance to practise their tumbling skills this Saturday at a "Stage Fighting" workshop.

Phil Newman, a member of Players' executive, is directing the action, though he makes no pretensions about his own prowess as a fighter.

"I've been to a couple of workshops myself," he confesses. Newman first learned about stage fighting as an undergrad in England's Southampton University. Interest in the technique developed after visits to Edinburgh. While rehearsing a play, Newman and co-actors decided to participate in a few fight workshops.

In their spare time wander-

ing the streets of the city, the group turned to mock fighting as "a form of relaxation." What seemed to observers a horrible street fight was actually just a few clowns having fun.

If it's swords you are looking for, you may be disappointed on Saturday. "It's going to be all hand to hand contact," says Newman. He says he isn't familiar with the more technical forms of fighting. Punching, kicking and banging heads against hard objects in a lifelike manner will be the focus of Newman's workshop. He hopes the group will learn the importance of sound effects and beating response before the end of the day.

Saturday's seven hour program starts with a warm up when participants can meet the

people they may later beat up. Newman says he is open to suggestions from others who may have knowledge of other techniques, including sword fighting.

"It's a group effort. I've just volunteered to organize it" says Newman.

The length of the program shouldn't scare people away. Lunch, breaks and games will make the day laid back and full of good fun. Towards the end of the day, members will break up into groups and perform a few sketches that Newman has put together.

Cost is \$3 per person and proceeds go to the Players' Theatre to fund future workshop programs and required equipment. Sign up outside Players' Theatre office, third floor, Union Building.

## Concordia art therapy in disagreement with Plato

by Tom McGillis

Once upon a time, Plato advised his 'republic' not to bother with artists, because art merely made useless copies of copies of things.

Joyce Jason and Roselly Miller are two artists who disagree with Plato. They are art therapists who will be giving a workshop at Concordia's Lacolle Centre for Educational Innovation this coming Sunday.

The title of their workshop is "In Search of the Image". It is open to artists and non-artists

wishing to do some "personal exploration and image-making exercises using art."

Jason explained to the *Daily* that the advantage of art therapy over other forms of therapy is its basis in non-verbal communication. She said that as people go through life, they develop complicated verbal defense mechanisms which help them talk around the problems they need to face. By moving to a new mode of expression, they can return to an honest, defenseless way of communicating.

This type of therapy seems,

at first, to be a vague and uncontrolled journey into the unconscious, but Miller describes the 'holding environment' as a controlling factor. This 'holding environment' is a warm, supportive atmosphere in which people can evaluate their own and each other's work.

Thus, even if a participant has a painful association with their art work, the group is able to help them put the focus back onto the work and onto solutions.

Miller, who also works with geriatric patients, says, "just

doing art is healing." It forces the artist to make decisions about what they want to say, and how to say it.

This approach to art therapy is notably non-clinical, and refreshingly so. And each therapeutic session has a permanent record - the art work itself. A patient has the unique opportunity of observing their own progress, first-hand.

And by getting their hands dirty and exploring the mysterious and oft-elitist 'world of the artist', the patient can connect to the related social power,

a power that can transport them out of their troubles - perhaps not permanently, but certainly creatively.

What would Plato think of that?

The workshop will take place at Lacolle Centre for Educational Innovation on the Loyola Campus of Concordia University, 7141 Sherbrooke St. W. Sunday, October 21, from 9h30 to 15h30. Contact Dianne Moffat at 848-4955 for more information.

COMMENT



## No screening out

*"The official language of Québec is Amerindian  
... The official language of Québec is the imaginary  
... The official language of Québec is cinema"*  
- New Film/Video Festival director Claude Chamberlain

The potential for dialogue between communities of difference is embedded in the artistic process itself. But most artists who do not speak in the white accents of patriarchy can only reach audiences actively seeking the unfamiliar. The International Festival of Film and Video (whose 19th edition begins in Montréal today) has always challenged that arrangement.

Despite the establishment status signalled by its corporate and bureaucratic sponsors, the festival stubbornly honours the genuine cutting edge, not yesterday's avant-garde. It treats artistic and cultural diversity as its motive force, rather than as an irritating inconvenience.

This year's festival, in particular, must be commended for the social and political immediacy of its programming. The inclusion of the "And Us... The First Nations" section, devoted to Native peoples from around the world, is an especially timely coup.

That sampling of Native films will render visible Québec's primary internal 'other' to the fashionable festival crowd, which often supports the government that led this summer's attack on the Mohawk people.

Purists may complain about the inclusion of films on First Nations from European and North American directors alongside genuine Native works. But such an approach can bridge gaps between marginalized artists and the mainstream. As a gesture of respect, it can only help autonomous Native productions access mainstream channels.

Women, gays and lesbians and people with AIDS are likewise well-served by the festival curators. Their provocative video and film statements are granted ample screen time. So are the realities and fantasies of 'Third World' areas we often imagine mute.

As festival co-director Dimitri Eipides told the *Gazette*, "If the festival is about anything, it's about being involved and relevant." Such engagement, manifested to the viewing eye, can alter perceptual habits and shatter illusions of consensus.

In the homogeneous Québec culture scene, those integrative alienations are vital and rare. As Chamberlain implies, the essence of *le Québec* is its own 'difference' in the North American context. The film and video festival embraces that contradiction. Unless we all plug into this alternating current, Québec's distinct cultural energy risks being subsumed into endogamic white noise.

Carl Wilson

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contributors  
Lucy Payette, Dan Robins, Jolyn Lawrence, Anne Kuriakose, Tom McGillivray, Amy Rosen, Kathleen Hickey, Noah Quastel, Jim Robertson

## In the van

To the Daily:

I am writing in response to the Daily's "Disruptive Elements" column from Monday, October 15, 1990 concerning Dans la rue. I have been a volunteer for Dans la rue since February, 1990. The "Disruptive Elements" column, in theory, is a practical way to inform the McGill community about stories that miss the headlines. Perhaps the Daily's "Disruptive Elements" writers should verify their sources of information to avoid writing broad generalizations about organizations like Dans la rue.

This article was disturbing because it "sensationalized" what Dans la rue works and stands for. Dans la rue was an organization founded two years ago to help the homeless youth in Montréal. We operate out of a Winnebago van four nights a week, distributing food, clothing, condoms, and helping the kids with other legal or medical matters. Most importantly, we are their friends. Dans la rue is for the homeless youth that the Canadian welfare system leaves behind. In Montréal, there are no shelters and very little counselling for homeless youth. Dans la rue hopes to open a shelter for those under 18 in the near fu-

ture.

To help these kids we must first as individuals realize that they are also individuals. We must dispel myths about homeless youth like, "prostitutes make a lot of money", "all punks are racist", and "people are homeless because they are lazy". Perhaps if the Daily wants some true "Disruptive Elements", Danny Clarke and Kenneth King should visit the van sometime and talk to some real people. The Dans la rue phone number is 938-0888 for anyone interested in volunteering or working on our fundraising campaign for a shelter.

Susan Humphries

U2 East Asian Studies

*Ed. note: The information about Dans la rue was obtained during a visit to the van. If any of it is inaccurate, please contact the Daily and specify.*

## How about Elvis...

To the Daily:

In response to the article "Prospects for a State Called Palestine", I would like to ask Alex Roslin to expand on Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's correspondence with Hitler during the 1948 War of Independence. Did Shamir also have tea with Elvis last week?

Oren Richman  
U1F BSc

## HYDE PARK

## Jewish inmates seek letters

Opinion by Leslie Lutsky.

There are currently about 40 Jewish inmates serving jail sentences in four medium and maximum security prisons in the northern New York State area. These Jewish prisoners do not fall into one easily defined category. They come from a variety of backgrounds and countries: some with Jewish backgrounds, others are more assimilated. The youngest are in their twenties, the oldest in their sixties or seventies.

Unfortunately, their contact with the Jewish world is almost non-existent. About the only Jew they see on a regular basis is Rabbi Eli Gottesman of Montréal. He conducts classes about religious law and the ethics of Judaism. Occasionally, members of a local religious organization accompany Rabbi Gottesman but they seem only capable of involving the Jewish inmates with religious ceremony. The psychological and emotional needs of the Jewish inmates are hardly met by these visits. They are in a very alien and stark atmosphere. Prison culture, aside from being very strict, is dominated by very narrow, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant ethics—hardly a place for minority rights and concerns.

The Jewish people in prison need contact with ordinary Jews to maintain their sense of being part of the Jewish world, their cultural identity. Rabbi Gottesman provides comfort, spiritual help and kosher food but he is virtually the only Jew they ever see. They need to know that we, Jews of the Diaspora, have not forgotten our brothers and sisters in prison.

If we don't care, who will?

*If you want to correspond with a Jewish prisoner, write a letter and send it with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Jewish Associates in Prison, c/o Librairie Alternative, Box 2035, Blvd. St. Laurent, H2X 2T3.*

## Flying crap

To the Daily:

It never fails to astound me on the rare occasion that I read the *McGill Daily*, (to which I pay entirely too much—using the quality as a gauge of course), how this paper can offend the intelligence of the student population of McGill. In every paper you assume that the student body hates the SSMU council, that we are leftist-artsy-radicals, and that in fact we actually believe that OUR money is being put to good use in the crap you try to pass off as actual reporting. I am more than a little sick and tired to see ad hominum attacks upon the president of the Students' Society and today (October 16) you have finally hit the bottom.

Since when do most students give a flying crap about many issues that you value? Do you really believe that the Daily is enlightening the student body as to issues affecting it? Are not progress and ANEEQ antithetical? Do you expect us to believe Ms. Morisset is solely responsible for the \$24 000 allocated for the info kiosk? Oh yes, and she really wanted all the 1200 students affected by the tuition fee hike to not be able to go to school this year... Can you say, "GET A BLOODY GRIP ON REALITY"?

I am very tired with the sensationalism that I pay for. In the three years I have gone to this school the quality of reporting has constantly declined and I would hope that the student body would be more reasonable as to assume that they have to pay for this.

Mary-Margaret Jones  
BA U2

PS Your beloved PGSS representatives did not vote against the info kiosk.

*ed. note: Perhaps Ms. Jones's seat on SSMU council helped her in solving our puzzle. Our apologies to all readers still working on the crossword for revealing the solution, but we do publish all student letters.*

When submitting letters, please include your name, year, department and phone number.

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# Legal theory casts painterly hue

by Heather MacKay

In legal theory, scholars add colour to the typically pale field of law. Sometimes they use paint, or at the very least a painter or two.

David Howse comes to legal theory via Sociology and Anthropology at Concordia University. He will visit McGill this week to speak on the transcontinental discourse of painterly constitutional law.

His thesis is simple. Howse claims the likes of Norman Rockwell and Alex Colville "have more to tell us about our respective constitutions" than the experts. He implies a split between the legal spirit of the two nations, Canada and the United States, and a parallel split in the spirit of representative artwork.

Howse has taken these scholarly leaps before. This year he published an essay on "Popular Song as Constitutional Discourse". But it seems the fusion of disciplines, rather than the length of the leap, is what makes Howse's current pronouncements fuzzy.

Howse quotes a full array of standard and strident voices to support his position - Allan Bloom, George Grant, Robert Fulford, Philip Resnick - like any insecure Canadian academic should. He also lifts methodology from as many sources, varying from theories of art interpretation to flat constitutional reading.

He dreams in a footnote of assembling the politicians of 'Canadian Summer 1990' (the public servants who wired the minefield for Meech and the Mo-



If Colville is ahistorical and Rockwell is actualized, what the hell is Sir Henry Raeburn (circa 1784)?

hawks) at a Colville retrospective, to get them "thinking" again. But more probably, Colville himself would drop down a notch and talk free trade, having been a vocal supporter in 1988.

Aside from the general blur, the smaller details of his work hold some interest. Howse connects Canadian multiculturalism with Colville's tendency toward juxtaposition.

Rockwell's America, he says, holds fast to the unity of 'reality' and 'optimism'.

This American optimism is embodied in Rockwell's couple sitting back and smiling after a quarrel in "The Debate." Meanwhile, Colville's "Horse and Train" could decimate said horse, but the question is left unanswered and the horse is suspended in ahistorical space. Howse claims there is always motion in Rockwell's paintings, which may be the march of technological history.

Rockwell's people stand out, but the faces are hazy in Colville's paintings. So Howse concludes that America has actualized and affirmed a legal text but Canada (oh hesitant, expansive, choppy, ahistorical Canada) "remains in the balance."

Believe Howse or laugh at him, but an iteration of the 'interpenetration' of legal and imaginative levels of meaning can only be good.

Professor Howse will speak as part of the Legal Theory Workshop this Friday at high noon in Chancellor Day Hall, 3644 Peel, room 202.

# CKUT broadcasts with feminist focus

by Jolyn Lawrence

Radio has always been dominated by men, resulting in a boring and predictable radio format. This Sunday, October 21, CKUT-Radio McGill will challenge standard radio guidelines with 'Feminist Focus Day', fourteen hours of women-oriented programs.

The theme of the day will be feminism, in a deliberate attempt to strive for an alternative approach to radio and women's programming. "Our aim is to examine different kinds of issues from the feminist perspective," said Jessica Marsh, an organizer of the day, who was also partially responsible for the station's Independent Music and Gay Focus days.

"We wanted to talk about non-typical issues," added Andrea Worrel, Coordinator of Women's Programming at CKUT. The goal of Feminist Focus is not just to provide a day when women from diverse

backgrounds will be featured but, in the opinions of the organizers, to provide a day of searching for strategies and solutions to women's issues and problems.

"The day should be inspirational to women who experience violence emotionally, physically and mentally in a male-dominated society," Marsh said.

Feminist Focus is also intended to introduce women to all aspects of radio production at CKUT at a less intimidating level than regular production affords. "Women working on our own thing will be a great way to obtain radio experience," explained Worrel.

The day will begin at 10h by examining the term 'Feminism' to clarify many misconceptions, followed by a wide variety of programming on women's issues.

Segments will include 'Women and Health/Sex, Sexu-

ality and Our Bodies', consisting of discussions ranging from women and AIDS and abortion (including a short piece about abortion rights in other countries), to addiction and drug testing on women. Francis Sheaver, a feminist scholar and sex researcher at Concordia, will offer her input on female sexuality.

'Women and Employment' will feature interviews with a woman carpenter who works in a physical plant as a representative of women in 'non-traditional' jobs, and Lisa Novak of Action Travail Femme.

The segment on 'Women of Colour' will be directed towards women of African, Asian, Latin and Native origins. Topics will include race politics, racism and discrimination, poetry, feminist ideology and black lesbian identity.

Worrel, who will host that segment, says the intention is to use radio "using our own voices,

to take control of how we are being represented."

Two panel discussions and a phone-in will be aired, to enable listener participation. The first panel will focus on single mothers, featuring three or four mothers of varying ages. The second panel is entitled 'Violence: The Global War Against Women'. Its topics will include sexual harassment, rape, wife battering, child assault, the Polytechnique murders of last December and 'dowry death' bride burnings in India.

Other contemporary issues that will be featured in 'Feminist Focus' segments will be: Men and Feminism, Women and Resistance, Women and Education, Women and Sports, Women and The Environment, a feminist comedy hour, Women and Poverty, Motherhood, Lesbian Culture, Women and Law, Women and the Sex Trade Industry, The Politics of Housework, Women and Immigration,

Feminist Artists and Art, and Women and Media.

In addition, the day will focus on women internationally, with contributions from Guatemalan feminist Rigoberta Menchu and Marta Lavy Vega, a member of the Alliance of Costa Rican Women.

Complete local community listings of women's groups, organizations and facilities will also be aired throughout the day.

According to Jessica Marsh, "The day will compliment CKUT's already high content of feminist programming."

"It will also raise the awareness that women are still oppressed, which is important to realize before focus can be made on change."

For more information contact Jessica Marsh at CKUT, 398-6787.

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issue is  
next week.  
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come by and  
tell us how its  
going.  
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We really,  
really do.

continued from page 1  
anuses and a talking penis."

In fact, one of the main characters in *Ed, the Happy Clown* has his head stuck on the end of the clown's penis. The head turns out to be that of a miniature Ronald Reagan from another dimension.

This, then, is what comes from the place where dreams come from. If only all dreams were this entertaining.

Over dinner, Brown described the classic First Meeting With Chester Brown: "You'd break your leg or something." (He was referring to an especially funny-and violent-panel from *Yummy Fur*.)

One dinner guest disagreed. "Something much more scatological, I'm sure," he insisted.

"I can't stop!" said his female companion, echoing the man whose anus is the portal between the dimensions in *Ed*. (The other dimension, the small one, is dumping all its sewage into his dimension, which is why

he "can't stop.")

Although Brown didn't mean what you think he meant when he said, "It's hard for me to believe I'm part of this world," he might just as well have been.

#### Autobiography

Things have changed, however. Whereas at one point, *Yummy Fur* was a perfect title for a comic which was nothing but surreal, now it merely serves as a link between the now and the then of Brown's work.

He has, for instance, switched to autobiography. He no longer writes about pygmies in the sewers. He tries to stick as close as possible to The Truth.

And he can probably handle the assignment. Brown's attention to detail is sharp enough that one man, reading his first every *Yummy Fur* comic, recognized the house where he was living.

For one thing, he carries a camera with him everywhere he goes, so he can get all the visual details right. Last week, he visited Chateauguay, partly to get pictures. While there, he noticed several details he'd gotten wrong in earlier issues.

Brown grew up in Chateauguay, and it still brings back strong memories for him. "I still dream about it every night," he said. Of his visit last week, he said, "It's hard to describe the emotion I felt."

The switch was not only occasioned by his emotions, however - he also realized that many of the comics he was reading and admiring were at least semi-autobiographical. Among his inspirations, he mentioned Julie Doucet, who uses herself as a protagonist in her fictitious *Dirty Plotte* plots. (Doucet also attended last weekend's convention.)

Although he allowed that in future he might do the same, and make up the stories he puts himself in, for now he's sticking to fact (mostly).

#### Jesus

Another departure for Brown is his recounting of the Gospels. He admitted it wasn't an original idea, but he thought his non-Christian viewpoint would make his version different from all the rest.

Although he doesn't believe in the divinity of Christ, he said the Bible is such a large part of our civilization that everybody should know something about it.

His version will be a straight one, which might surprise someone who'd encountered the earlier issues of *Yummy Fur*. Everything that's in the Gospels will be in the comic.

He's now finished Mark, and is a third of the way through Matthew. When he's done the Gospels, and run out of personal history, who knows where he'll turn? Perhaps quantum dynamics.

I'd buy it.

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# Walter quite mature for his age

by Amy Rosen

Players' Theatre's second production of the year, *Walter Grows Up*, is an unusual and innovative piece which marks the Toronto based Theatre Offal's debut in Montréal.

Up until now, Playwright Colin Kriv's contribution to drama at McGill came in the form of one-act pieces written for the McGill Drama Festival, a contest which Kriv has won for the past three years.

With *Walter Grows Up*, he once again demonstrates his great talent for writing dialogue.

The play is a potent account of the power-struggles and miscommunications within the hierachic structure of the nuclear family.

It is an in-depth character analysis which deals with the confrontations among three individuals who assert their control over each other with use of the weapons they possess.

Among these, words prove to be the most powerful of all.

Barbwire and mesh walls enclose mother, father and son in a cold environment where distinguishing the criminal from the hero becomes difficult.

Walter appears to be the only inherently evil personality of the three characters.

Kerry Harris plays the part with passion as he taunts his parents by ignoring their attempts at communication, incessantly talking about the

grotesque goings on in prison, and by implying that bad parenting got him where he is today.

"I came here so I could go back to prison," this 'angry young man' tells his mother.

Anna Drblik plays April, a strong-willed woman who senses motherly instincts rushing up her spine soon after her longlost son shows up for breakfast one morning.

Ed Caissie is Walter's pragmatic father Julius, and in this capacity provides most of the successful humour and the plausible emotional charge of play.

Walter's visit marks the beginning of a long game of cat and mouse where Julius sees April as the small trusting mouse, ready to be pounced upon by Walter, the devious cat. He discovers that a man with a fire poker can easily do away with a troublesome cat and tries to realize this vision.

*Walter Grows Up* is an emotional cornucopia for the audience. We laugh along with the characters one minute, and check ourselves immediately, realizing that commiseration is what they need.

A fine set comes together with three top-notch performances to make the play a success.

*Walter Grows Up* plays until Saturday, October 20, at Players' Theatre, 3480 McTavish, 3rd floor, at 20h00. Tickets are \$4 for students.

## NEWS BRIEF

### FEEQless consumer tips

In anticipation of next week's referendum, Students' Society has produced its very own 'How-To-Sell-FEEQ' package for eager campaigners.

The tipsheets contain information on the history of the student movement in Québec, facts about le Fédération des étudiantes et étudiants du Québec (FEEQ) in particular, and, most interestingly, "Some Rules to Remember While Campaigning."

These last chummy instructions lay out the general attitudes any FEEQ campaigner should be able to call up at will, as well as specific instructions on how to answer questions.

Apparently, the ideal FEEQ campaigner should be cheerful, ready to listen, and able to put up posters untiringly. (This last is easier than it seems. Usually, you'd have to search around for a poster and get it approved before putting up a poster, but SSMU's Campaign Tips say, "If this is simply too much of a hassle, stick them up anyway.")

The reason for all the cheerfulness is simple. "If you are pleasant to people, they will associate that pleasantness with FEEQ when voting day comes around."

One of the more interesting rules is number four: "Tailor your answers to the person that's asking them (sic)." That is, "Different people require different answers, even if they're asking the same questions."

In particular, FEEQ campaigners need to keep a keen eye out for those tricky students who "seem to be from the political left." They can be tough customers.

And then there's the classroom speech. By next Monday, over 150 classes will have been targeted, with different faculties getting different pitches about the wonders of FEEQ. And it is absolutely necessary, says "Some Rules to Remember", that each one of those 150 speeches includes the phrase, "It's time to end the isolation."

The rules also say not to argue too fanatically with anti-FEEQers. After all, "one voter is not worth possibly losing your cool over." (The rules don't say how many voters your cool is actually worth.) "It's only student politics, after all."

Dan Robins



MANI HAGHIGHI

Ed Caissie, Anna Drblik and Kerry Harris in *Walter Grows Up*.

## Bread buzz listings

by Mani and his holy Rhino

People have been feeding me bread. It's nice. I feel a nice buzz floating in and around my forehead. The streets are bright and wet. Things are happening in them. And these are the Bread Buzz listings. They go out to our friends next door.

**Tonight.** I suggest some puzzles can perhaps be solved at Quai de Brumes, 4481 St. Denis, where Mental Wealth shall be rocking and allegedly even rolling. Or catch Bob Mould, ex-of Hüsker Dü, at Foufounes Électriques.

In the meanwhile, the McGill Bookfair will be happening in Redpath hall all day. Later on, two relatively interesting things will happen almost simultaneously. Oliver Stone's *Salvador* will be screened at Leacock 132 at 19h30, and the Black Theatre Workshop's production of *Smile orange* runs at the Centaur theatre (288-3161) half an hour later.

Also, the International Festival of New Cinema and Video begins at 21h30, at the Rialto, with a double bill of french-language films from at-home and out-there. Watch for festival events till the 28th, everybody. Find a schedule. We'll guide you as we can (see page 6, for example). Then the night ends, I eat my bread, and

**Friday 19** begins. Today David Sedley of Cambridge wonders if Aristotelian Teleology is Anthropocentric over on the ninth floor of the Leak, Bldg. But you don't have to go. I assure you, it is. Instead you might want to go to Club Soda and dip your bread into some Idyl Tea.

As an alternative to this you

probably want to check out *The Kiss of the Spider Woman* over at Leak 132, or listen to John Fowler's guitar gently weep over at le Tycoon at 22h00 (96 Sherbrook).

And on Festivalwatch, note the yet-to-be announced opening film of the First Nations portion of the festival at the Rialto, 21h30, the art of video screening at le Parallèle at 19h, and Peter Greenaway's *TV Dante* show there at 23h. Painting as Constitutional Discourse is discussed on page seven of this issue so I won't babble about it. I'll just eat my bread.

**Saturday 20.** Late tonight the Portable Ethnic Taxi drives into Station 10 for some groovy culture shock. A few hours before that happens, around 21h00, Linda Morrison will do the folk thing at Golem.

Missing plays at Leak 132 a bit earlier at 19h30 and the day begins with Stage Fighting Workshop at Players' Theatre (turn to page 5 and read all about it). And the festival follows, but you need a program, gang. Otherwise Saturday is a backward day. But

**Sunday 21.** isn't. It's forward. It's positive...full of bread. Lots of bread, actually. A rising, yeasty debate on First Nations will complement the festival today, at the Cinéma Outremont, 13h. The Daily will be there and (at least by proxy, then) so will you.

Lotsa music today, too, with Taj Mahal at the Rising Sun and Wil Offermans and Junko Ueda at Theatre La Chapelle, 15h00 (\$7,845-1307, see page 3). After all the bread and circuses we will be full of energy and

politically correct on

**Monday 22.** and go to the Public Assembly for Native Rights March to demand justice for Innu people at 19h30, Centre St. Pierre, 1212 Panet, Room 100 (598-2444). If we're politically correct, but a little lazy, we can go to the Alley instead at 18h00 and scream against grapes during the debate on whether or not McGill Students Should Boycott California Grapes.

And watch out for *The Machine That Killed People* (17h, Parallèle) and *The Meat Grinder* (18h, Cinémathèque) in the Festival. It's dinner time, and I think they're after our bread. Aice!

The most marvelous event on campus is a concert at 20h in Pollack Hall (555 Sherbrooke) during which McGill-based composers will pump some wild noise through trumpets, saxes and MIDI computers, to produce rhythmic-melodic music. But the most enigmatic event on campus is *Second Sex, Third Reich*, a paper given by Claudia Koonz of Duke University at the Senior Common Room, 3520 University, 15h.

**Tuesday 23.** Except for the ongoing festival, nothing happens today. It's like lots of butter and no bread, I weep.

**Wednesday 24.** Sure, there's that pesky fête, but Prof. Thomas F. Torrance gives a paper on Christ, the Light of the World at the Presbyterian College at 19h45. In light of this every other event becomes pointless. This was my bread. Time for some wine.

Thursday, October 18

The McGill University Book Fair continues today from 9h to 21h in Redpath Hall. Entrance is free. The McGill Film Society's Poster Sale on the ground floor of the Union Building from 9h to 16h30. It's Hillel's Movie Day. Stand-up comics will be played on video from 10h to 15h in the Hillel House lounge, 3460 Stanley. Call Fran at 845-9171 for more information.

Sandra Phillips, author of *Smart Shopping Montréal*, will give tips on saving money at 12h at the Jewish Public Library in the Joseph and Ida Berman Auditorium, 5151 Côte Ste. Catherine Road. Admission is free, call 345-2627 for info.

A lecture on labour dispute resolution in the public sector begins at 10h30 in room 110 of the Bronfman Building. Madeleine Lemieux, the president of the Québec Essential Services Council will be speaking. Come early. A presentation on how to apply to CIDA's Youth Initiative Project Fund will be given by students who participated this summer in room 12, Leacock, at 12h.

Students for Global Responsibility are meeting at 17h in room 310 of the Union. Everyone welcome, call 284-6385 for more information.

The Graduate Program in Communications presents a Speakers Series in Mass Communications and Culture. Today's speaker is Paul Heyer on "Media, Myth, and the Titanic: The Communication Disaster" at 16h, 3465 Peel. Everyone welcome.

Amnesty International Film Week presents Salvador in Leacock 132 at 19h30.

Concordia's Philosophy Department presents a public lecture: "Life Without Principles: Reconciling Theory and Practice" with Joseph Margolis of Temple University, at 20h in room 207 of the Bryan Building (Loyola Campus). Phone 848-2500.

The Mothers of May Square from Argentina will be at the centre of a public meeting at 19h, at the Centre St-Pierre, 1212 Panet (Papineau Metro), room 200. Voluntary contribution.

GALOM, Gays and Lesbians of McGill, is having a movie night in

room 425, Union, at 19h. MAIS and McGill Chaplaincy Services get-together for international students. Everybody welcome at Newmann Centre, 3484 Peel. Phone 284-7604 or 937-7543 for more information.

CRSG Benefit Bash at the Rockaway Café, 3745 St. Laurent, with Jah Children, Dharma Head Trio, Bare Bones and Guayaba at 20h. Admission \$4 students and unwaged, \$5 others.

Concordia's Science College presents a lecture on "The Sun and Solar Eclipses" by Dr. Jay M. Pasachoff at 20h30, room H-110, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W. For information call 848-2595.

Hillel's Jewish Women's Circle is meeting at 19h at 3460 Stanley. Call Fran at 845-9171 for information.

Friday, October 19  
Animal Rights Day from 10h to 17h in room 108, Union. Contact META at 276-0914 for more information.

McGill Theatresports presents improvised comedy in the Player's Theatre at 20h or after the play. Phone 288-7229 for info.

Most laughs for a dollar, call 398-6813.

Amnesty International Film Week presents The Kiss of the Spider Woman in Leacock 132 at 19h30.

Saturday, October 20  
Amnesty International Film Week ends with the screening of Survival in Leacock 132 at 19h30.

Sunday, October 21  
A Yiddish Lecture presented by the Jewish Public Library with Rabbi Moises David Schiff of São Paulo, Brazil; speaking on "Rashi: His Life and Works". 20h in the Joseph and Ida Berman Auditorium, 5151 Côte Ste-Catherine Road, admission \$2 students and seniors, \$3 others. Please call 345-2627 for information.

The Intercultural Institute of Montreal presents an opportunity to meet with the South Asian Community about the transmission of the knowledge of sacred arts from 13h to 16h at 4917 St-Urbain. Admission is \$5, \$3 for full-time students, unemployed or elderly persons. Phone 288-7229 for info.

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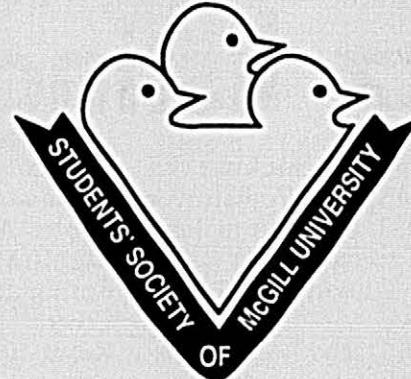
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# Elections McGill

## POLL LOCATIONS — REFERENDUM '90

	Tuesday Oct. 23	Wednesday Oct. 24	Thursday Oct. 25
1) Bishop Mountain Hall	11-13:30 16:30-19	16:30-19	
2) Bronfman	11-17:00	10-16:00	10-16:00
3) Burnside Basement		10-16:00	10-16:00
4) Chancellor Day Hall		10-16:00	10-16:00
5) Dentistry & Anatomy		10-16:00	10-16:00
6) Education		10-16:00	10-16:00
7) Leacock	11-16:00	10-16:00	10-16:00
8) McConnell	11-16:00	10-16:00	10-16:00
9) McIntyre		10-16:00	10-14:00
10) Music		10-16:00	10-16:00
11) Redpath	11-19:00	10-19:00	10-16:00
12) Royal Victoria College		11:30-13:30 16:30-18:30	
13) Stewart-Biology		10-16:00	10-16:00
14) Thomson House	12-19:00	12-19:00	12-16:00
15) Union Building	11-19:00	10-19:00	10-16:00
16) Gym		12-17:00	12-16:00

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# Classifieds

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Willing females and males needed for student haircuts. Supervised by professionals. Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 5:30 pm for cuts. \$10. Estetica 2175 Crescent. for appointments 849-9231.

## 361 - Articles for Sale

One-way air ticket for sale. Mt-Vancouver Oct. 18. Female \$100. 598-0838 (answering machine).

One return plane ticket, Montreal-Frankfurt, Germany. Oct. 22 - Nov. 17, \$750. 935-4275.

Toasty-warm this winter! Men's size medium/ large down coat for sale. Hooded parka style with elastic arm liners. Call for parka: 286-1404. \$60.00.

For sale: stereo cabinet, blackwood, Ikea, 2 available, stackable, will sell separately, \$40 each. 285-4507

Leica cameras - M4, M3, M5 lenses, Canon P, Contax (German), etc. Antique watches, swords, medals. Russian army watches - we buy old things. EXXA Military Surplus 550 President Kennedy 843-6248.

## 365 - Wanted to Buy

Avid cyclist interested in buying new or used bicycle components. Will pay top dollar. Glenn 272-6516.

## 372 - Lost &amp; Found

Taken from Currie gym - sweater, brown with yellow stripe. Oct. 9. Immense sentimental value. Exchange? No questions asked. Leave message Union 415. Terry (274-8189).

## 374 - Personals

A western educated bilingual Togolese age 45 seeks a Canadian-French-German-Philippine for a serious relationship/marriage. Interested write: Box 1706, New Canaan, Ct. 06840-1706, USA.

Is your closet getting too small? Gays and Lesbians of McGill offers an information/counselling talkline. Call with questions, problems or just to talk. Phone 398-6822 or drop by Union 417 M-F, 7-10.

We need men!! Tenors are desperately needed for McGill Savoy Society's production of "The Yeoman of The Guard"! Sing, dance & have fun! Everyone welcome! Call 398-6820.

Hey, hey, hey! What do you got to say? 398-6246 McGill Nightline. 6 pm - 3 am every night.

Pass ... wanna buy a letter C? SHHHHH! That's right — a letter C! If so leave a note for Susan in the Daily classifieds.

Affirmative action wording needs discussion and support. Does inclusion mean you? General meeting October 23rd (Tuesday) at 5:30 pm; Union B-09/B-10. Be a constitutional amender!

Parental death: Would like to speak to anyone who lost parent(s) to death during childhood or adolescence, for research. Peter Cooperman, M. Ed., 483-3256.

Hi! You came looking for me in early September - your guide last year - let's meet! Please leave message in welcome centre. Terry.

## 383 - Lessons Offered

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## 385 - Notices

Gays and Lesbians of McGill offers an information and counselling talkline. Call us with questions, problems or just to talk. Phone 398-6822 or drop by Union 417 M-F, 7-10.

Lesbian/Gay discussion group held Fridays at The Yellow Door Coffee House (3625 Aylmer) at 17h30.

Single, non-recycled satire publication seeks numerous pencil-pushers for page filling. Must like verbs, will supply adjectives. Union 406, 398-6816, deadline Oct. 31.

Landlord/tenant? Family? Consumer law? If you need help sorting out your legal problems call or drop by the McGill Legal Information Clinic • M-Fri 10-5 pm • 398-6792 • Rooms B20, B21 & B01B of the student union building! We're here for you!

McGill Biology Student Union presents an information session on Graduate Studies in the Life Sciences 12h to 14h on Friday, October 19th in Stewart Biology Building, W23A.

Thinking of marriage? Sign up for Chaplaincy Service's Preparation Course October 30, Nov. 8, 15 and 22. 7-10 pm. Registration 398-4104.

St. Martha's Community meets Sundays 10:30 am, 3521 University. Informal, ecumenical community. Everyone welcome. Throughout Oct. special series on prayer. Info: R. Clare, 398-4104. Presbyterian-United Church Chaplaincy.

The McGill Film Society poster sale. Last day. Amazing selection, low prices. 4:00-4:30 pm. ground floor Union building. Don't miss it.

GALOM's Movie Night, "Common Threads" (Oscar winner) & 2nd film. Thursday, Union 425. 7:00 pm. Free Admission.

Like to work on a development project? Apply to CIDA's Youth Initiative Program. Introductory

workshop will be given by McGill students, today, 12-1:00 pm, Leacock Rm. 12. Call Helen 286-0802.

Sopranos, Tenors, Basses are needed for McGill Choral Society, repertoire: Rutter's Gloria, PDO Bach's Seasonings, and others. Rehearsal Wednesday 19h30 in Strathcona Music Building C310.

## 389 - Musicians wanted

Drummer needed to complete experienced band doing high energy R&B and other stuff too. Jamming and gigs. Pete 282-1353, Ethan 287-1224.

Singers wanted. Professional and volunteer sopranos, altos, tenors and basses. Shaare Zion Synagogue Choir, for audition and information please call 486-3298.

Needed: a trumpet player to compose a solo for a film. Contact Frank 255-7763 or David 494-8911.

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# Is the Medical Building 'sick'?

Employees in the McIntyre Medical Building worry that their offices are sick. The McIntyre's 16 storeys house over 200 labs and nearly 1000 employees. Everything from radioactive residues to animal carcasses and biochemical wastes are stored or produced within its walls.

For years, McGill's Safety Office has received reports from employees complaining of health disorders they say might be linked to air contamination in McIntyre. The University denies there's any serious problem.

by Susana Béjar

This week, construction began on the 16th floor of the building to repair flaws in its fume exhaust system. While this attempt at a solution is welcome, some say it is token, and too late.

Until this July, the building was also a storage depot for hazardous wastes city-wide. Two years ago, more than 230 employees signed a petition demanding a university investigation into health conditions in the building.

The university denied there was a problem. "Every time anyone tried to do anything about it, it was just ignored," said one anonymous source, a McGill employee.

In September, complaints of strong odours prompted air quality tests by the Safety Office. Smoke tests revealed that vapours issued by laboratory fume hoods were re-entering the building through outside vents and through leaks in the building's mechanical rooms on the top floor.

Nearly all the building's 84 fume hoods are affected by flaws in the quarter-century old, leaky exhaust system.

"Fume covers are used for things that are volatile, likely to produce vapours or to become airborne. Many of the labs use organic solvents. They dissolve cells when you have them in a test tube; they're probably doing pretty good work on your lungs, your liver," said one professor working at McIntyre, who wishes to remain anonymous.

She also told the *Daily* a large contingent in the pharmacology department is concerned about 'sick building syndrome' and complaining of fatigue, high rates of virus infection and general discomfort associated with time spent in the building.

But McGill Safety Officer Wayne Wood denies McIntyre poses any health risk to people working in the building.

"This is really an issue of human behaviour and perception. It's about how people perceive risk," said Wood. Wood equates the fears people have for their occupational health with fear of flying.

"The degree of control is a big factor. Just as people feel safer driving than flying, despite the safety facts and statistics; people tend to be very concerned about air quality because they know there are activities in the building beyond their control," he said.

## Studies Inadequate

Wood also claims people would not worry if they knew what they were talking about. He said his tests show no abnormal air contamination, emphasizing that no radio isotopes were detected by his studies. But according to one non-academic employee, a private report found traces of isotopes in the air.

"It's simply not true," Wood insisted. "Our monitoring for radiation has been superior since even before this office

opened. Recently, in response to concerns about radiation contamination in one of the mechanical rooms, we monitored the area and the people and found nothing," he said.

Iodine radiation can be monitored by checking the thyroid gland of anyone who might have been exposed. Posters in McIntyre's elevators yesterday announced thyroid check-ups for staff. Wood says these are regular occurrences.

Three years ago, physiology department workers on the 12th floor of the building complained of a high incidence of thyroid disease in their area. An independent study of the department was carried out.

According to Wood, the study was inconclusive. But the McIntyre professor pointed out that the results were never contrasted with results from any other kind of office environment, and said inconclusive results should not mean an end to action.

"I agree that none of our information on McIntyre is conclusive. But where there's smoke is there fire? Shouldn't people do something?" she said.

For example, she said, "These vapours are not coming through the doors of open labs. They're coming through our air vents. And our air vents are always on."

Typically, air quality studies measure such factors as carbon dioxide content, said Wood. The McIntyre prof. says the tests conducted by the safety office are too limited to prove anything.

Air analysis can be very complicated and very expensive. No test can be designed that will completely analyze air content. Studies are conducted with particular objects in mind. In other words, you have to know what you're looking for before you can find it.

"Who knows what they're missing?" she said. "So many kinds of volatile materials are studied in these labs. Many of the chemicals being used in the building don't have any safety limits. When three or four of these are used and mixed, we can have no idea of what is circulating."

Wood acknowledges the limitations of the tests available to him, but points to McGill's safety record as a sign that things can't be going wrong.

"We're not a high risk activity if you compare accident rates and time loss and disease loss," Wood said. "The biggest proportion of our accidents is related to slips, trips, and falls. In fact, if I were to label the most dangerous device in the University I'd have to say stairways."

## Concentrations vs. durations

McGill VP Physical Plant Sam Kingdon said, "The scientists in the labs are the people that are most consistently exposed to the products of labwork where their concentration is likely to be the

highest. I don't know of any evidence that these people experience an increased level of health problems over anyone else."

Kingdon points out that lab products have been diluted by fresh air by the time they reach other parts of the building. "Solvents are a prime example of this," he said.

But the professor says her concern isn't the concentration so much as the length of exposure to what might be contaminated air.

"Chronic exposure to low levels for long terms brings you to the same endpoint. Some of the things we are breathing we can't excrete. We don't get rid of them; they accumulate in our kidneys, our fat, etc. That's a nice present for being a loyal employee at McIntyre for 20 years," she said.

"Sure, we're exposed to things like radon and PCBs outside of this building. It's not the only site for dangerous exposure. But the duration of the exposure is just as important as what you are exposed to."

"If this was a business and not a university, perhaps something would be done," she said.

## McIntyre time bomb

Trefor Garland, president of the McGill University Non-Academic Staff Association (MUNASA), has heard complaints about McIntyre from MUNASA members for years.

"The building is recognized as a time bomb. Everything is precarious in terms of how things are set up," he said.

"Health and safety is a tremendous issue but it has one thing standing against it," said Garland. "This university needs to pour \$300 million into its buildings, not to achieve the safety levels we would like to see, but just to remove dangerous flaws that have yet to be dealt with."

McGill has a deferred maintenance program with a \$300 million wish list of repairs waiting to be done, and no cash to do them.

"It's a matter of defining priorities," Garland said. "You can divert your funds to making sure you have a good place to work in, but then you may find you have no students, no university. A lot of universities have already made their choice — for the students. Health and safety are not a priority."

Thirty seven thousand dollars will be spent on repairs to McIntyre's fume hood exhaust system this week, according to McGill Operations Manager Blake McGibbon. The construction is part of the deferred maintenance program.

But whether these repairs actually solve the problems of McIntyre employees remains to be seen.

"So far we don't know how much of our problem is internal or external. We can't be assured that these repairs will fix anything," said the McIntyre professor.

As in every other step of this problem, the biggest obstacle to a solution is a complete lack of information, she said.

On Tuesday, the Safety Office received the results of its latest study of nineteen or twenty components in the air. A meeting was supposed to take place yesterday to reveal the results of the study, but it was cancelled. Sources confirm that the test results are negative.

According to Kingdon, it is difficult to determine the facts in these cases because some impressions of the situation are sensationalized.

"The ability to have a decent study done and a reasonable appraisal is often coloured by sensation," he said. "We need to be concerned about this, but we need to be intelligently concerned about it."

The non-academic employee said the administration simply isn't prepared to admit there's been a problem.

"They couldn't afford to admit it," he said, "the implications are too far reaching. We would be forced to re-examine the very basis for our science, for the university. There's no one in the administration who would be able to keep their job."

